



***Congressman Sherrod Brown***



# Reports TO VETERANS

**Summer 2003**

## ***Brown Opposes Hike in Veterans' Copay for Prescription Drugs***

Our country promised veterans a lifetime of medical benefits and care, and the decision to raise the copayment by 250% is an unjust reversal of that commitment. Many veterans live on fixed incomes, and this increase more than triples their monthly burden for medication.

Veterans should not be forced to pay out of pocket for medical care the administration has failed to adequately fund. Brown cosponsored H.R. 627, which would repeal the \$7 copay and prevent the VA from increasing co-payments of medication for the treatment of non-service connected disabilities for the next five years. It would also provide an increase in the maximum annual rates of pension payable to surviving spouses of veterans of a period of war.



## ***Brown Unveils Online Veterans Resource Center***

Congressman Brown announced an updated electronic resources web page to provide constituents with information on veterans services and legislation.

This new site will provide our veterans with the service information they need, and allows them to follow the legislation that affects those services. The new site can be found by accessing Brown's webpage:

**[www.house.gov/sherrodbrown](http://www.house.gov/sherrodbrown)**

## ***Brown Dedicates Stamp at Akron Post Office***

On June 4, Congressman Sherrod Brown joined Akron Post Office officials and area veterans organizations at a ceremony dedicating the stamp commemorating the Purple Heart.

The Purple Heart definitive stamp was issued on May 30 to honor the sacrifices of the men and women who serve in the U.S. military. The unveiling and issuance of this stamp commemorates the oldest military decoration in the world still in present use.



***Congressman Brown welcomed more than 250 veterans to his June 30 meeting on the VA's proposal to close the Brecksville VA Hospital. He is pictured with Don Banyard of North Royalton and William Caldwell of Cleveland.***

# Legislative Update

## Brown Opposes Budget That Cuts Veterans Programs

The VA Budget under the Republican plan provides \$6 billion less than the Congressional Budget Office estimates is necessary to meet current obligations.

These new provisions will force over 1.4 million veterans either to be denied care or to drop their enrollment in the VA system. Brown is backing legislation to restore these cuts and prevent further reductions in services.

## Brown Pushes for an End to the ‘Disabled Veterans Tax’

Congressman Sherrod Brown signed a “discharge petition” seeking to scrap a 112-year-old rule prohibiting many veterans from receiving both retirement and disability compensation known as concurrent receipt.

Under congressional rules, 218 out of 435 lawmakers have to sign the petition to force a vote. Currently, veterans who earn retirement benefits by serving 20 years or more in the military would have their benefits reduced by the amount they are receiving in disability pay. Brown believes veterans are entitled to the full amounts in both programs.



## Toll-Free Contact Numbers for Department of Veterans Affairs

VA Benefits: .....1-800-827-1000  
Life Insurance: .....1-800-669-8477  
Education/GI Bill: .....1-888-442-4551  
Health Care: .....1-877-222-8387  
Income Verification: .....1-800-929-8387  
Gulf War/Agent Orange: .....1-800-749-8387

Headstones/Markers: .....1-800-697-6947  
Deaf Telecommunications: ...1-800-829-4833  
World Wide Web: .....www.va.gov

**Congressman Sherrod Brown visits with Joe Temkiewicz and other members of Elyria VFW Post 1079 about recent congressional action on the veterans budget.**



### Congressman Sherrod Brown Here to Serve You

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